

Lydia Pedersen      BA, BMus, MEd, DMin

Lydia has enjoyed a rich double career as school music specialist and church musician. She was trained in Montreal by eminent organists Raymond Daveluy, Bernard Lagacé and John Grew, and in Toronto by Wm. Wright and Douglas Bodle. Her latest church employ, and still her church home, was at Royal York Road United in Toronto. During her thirty year tenure there she was active in numerous professional organizations, including the Royal Canadian College of Organists. Always cognizant of the power of hymns to shape and nurture faith, Lydia's interest became a passion during her time on the editorial team that produced the United Church hymnal *Voices United* (1996). Around that time she discovered the Hymn Society in the United States and Canada and has been a keen member ever since, serving also for many years on the executive of the Southern Ontario Chapter of the Hymn Society, to date the only active chapter of the Hymn Society.

Upon retirement in 2009 from her church position, Lydia's interest in hymn writing led her to pursue a Doctor of Ministry degree at Emmanuel College in Toronto. Her dissertation was based on the development of a hymn text writing workshop, which she enjoys leading on request. Her hymns have been published in several hymnals and publications. She has written articles for the Hymn Society's journal *THE HYMN*, and teaches hymn writing at Emmanuel College. She is happily married with three daughters and four grandchildren.

Of her winning St. Christopher's hymn competition, Lydia says, "I am deeply honoured by this decision, knowing how many excellent hymn writers there are in America and Canada. It is the first time I have won such a competition. What engaged me from the start was a confluence of things I hold dear: Cape Cod, the location of many happy memories; the purpose, inaugurating a new organ; and the stated wish for a text that lifts up music in the context of Pentecost, one of my favourite church festivals. I feel grateful and very privileged to think that my words will help St. Christopher's congregation celebrate this memorable, festive occasion, and I extend my most heartfelt congratulations to you in your rejoicing. May your new instrument bring you many years of delight, comfort, faith, hope and joy through the unique blessings of music."